

Seeds

The Parable of the Sower Explained

"Hear, then, the parable of the sower.

*When anyone hears the word of the kingdom
and does not understand it,
the evil one comes
and snatches away what is sown in the heart;
this is what was sown on the path.*

*As for what was sown on rocky ground,
this is the one who hears the word
and immediately receives it with joy,
yet such a person has no root
but endures only for a while,
and when trouble or persecution arises
on account of the word,
that person immediately falls away.*

*As for what was sown among thorns,
this is the one who hears the word,
but the cares of this age
and the lure of wealth choke the word,
and it yields
nothing.*

*But as for what was sown on good soil,
this is the one who hears the word
and understands it,
who indeed bears fruit
and yields in one case a hundredfold,
in another sixty,
and in another thirty."*

~ Matthew 13: 18-23 -- (spacing added)

Those of you who have been reading these reflections for the past several years have heard me say I am a very visual person, and the adding of spacing to scripture to make it read more like a free verse poem helps my brain make sense of it. Not necessarily deep theological sense, at least not at first, but big-picture sense. In the above case, I find it particularly helpful in grasping the explanations Jesus gives to the parable of the sower.

The path, rocky ground, thorns, good soil. This is what we are dealing with.

The path. A useful structure in life, gets you where you want to go, but not conducive to growing things from seed. Too many feet, too many opinions packed down, too susceptible to a sudden wind reshaping the landscape. No room for understanding.

Rocky ground. Too shallow. Dirt might work great briefly, a short-lived explosion of growth, but no roots. Haven't had time. Haven't made space by moving some of those rocks. Started great, ended unremarkably. Doesn't even leave a substantial memory.

Thorns. The cares of this age. The lure of wealth. Choked growth. Oh how familiar is this place for many of us. And how are we not to engage in the cares of this age?? How are we not to try to provide well for ourselves and the ones we love?? And yet. And yet. No one is going to come and adult for us. We have to find balance in our lives. It's so hard. Yet it must be done.

Good soil. We've been there. We've seen it! Children with dawning understanding. Older adults with softening opinions, drawn by circumstance into re-thinking long-held beliefs. Us, at various moments in our lives. Feeling aligned with the Spirit, bearing fruit.

All of it part of our journey.

~ Lindy Thompson

Pray

God, please bless the spiritual journeys each of us are on. Give us eyes to see, ears to hear, and cultivate within us good, good soil. Amen.

Meditate



Finding Balance

Laurie Hanson Roberts leads us in a meditation practice that guides us finding balance in life that can sometimes feel chaotic and off-kilter.

[**Click here for Meditation Practice**](#)

Soul Care

Lindy's use of spacing helped me experience today's scripture in a completely new way. As I read each "stanza", a memory of a particular situation in my life came to mind:

the childhood experience of evil that stole my sense of safety,

the season of loss and depression in my young adult years when my trust in God failed,

the dry season of near neglect in my middle adult years when my faith in God was hanging on by a thread.

Now, in this "third third of life" I can see how all of these experiences have been like fertilizer for the soil of my life. The steady practice of spiritual disciplines have been the sun and rain to seeds long planted, that now produce good fruits of trust and faith and security in God.

All of it, by God's grace.

What's it been like for you? What story of seeds, paths, rocky ground, thorns, good soil, and fruit do the seasons of your life tell? Spend some time pondering your story. How have you experienced God's grace through the seasons? Write about it in your journal.

~Shared by Leigh McFalls

NEW AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Looking Ahead to Sunday Worship

Scripture for Sunday: Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Sermon Title: *The Gracious Sower*

As we look ahead to Sunday, I encourage you to read the scripture ahead of time as part of your devotional time and preparation for Sunday. One passage of scripture can easily take us in many directions. Use the sermon title to help guide your reflections. Spend time in Lectio Divina with the scripture as part of your daily devotions. There are lots of videos on YouTube on how to participate in Lectio Divina. Here is a meditative video that is instructive to be a resource to you –

Meditative How To - Lectio Divina

Sunday Night Gatherings

It will be time to start back Sunday night fall activities before you know it! I created a survey to help us plan accordingly. Please take a few minutes to fill it out. If you have questions or comments, let me know! -Pastor Laura

Survey for Sunday Night Bible Study

Trustees Update

Dear Friends,

We are grateful for the many ways we work together to keep our church family safe. From our Safe Sanctuaries policy to other security measures, we give thanks for the measures in place to keep our church campus safe. As part of our ongoing commitment, we want to share an important update from our trustees.

Recently, our church cleaners encountered an individual running down the stairs and exiting through the front entrance one morning. In addition, staff members have occasionally found doors left unlocked and lights left on after the building had been secured by trustees or staff. While no one was harmed, these incidents remind us of the importance of taking reasonable precautions to protect our congregation and our church campus.

In response, our trustees approved the installation of security cameras throughout our campus. A camera is also located near the pastor's office, with safeguards in place to protect privacy during pastoral conversations. Please know that these cameras do not record audio, preserving the confidentiality of conversations. Their sole purpose is to enhance the security of our church buildings and provide a safer environment for everyone who worships, serves, and gathers here.

We are grateful for the trustees' ongoing leadership and for our shared commitment to making Walnut Grove United Methodist Church a safe, welcoming, and caring place for all.

Peace be with you,

Pastor Laura

Save The Date – Charge Conference -- Sunday, October 11!

Charge Conference is Sunday, October 11th at 3:00pm. Walnut Grove UMC will be hosting this year. This is open to all members of the church! Please join us as we continue to grow together in Christ!

OCIM Update

Jimmy and Brenda took 110 pounds of food to OCIM on July 6th. The shelves are looking better; however, we still need to keep the donations coming.

A total of 1630 pounds has been delivered by Walnut Grove since January! Thank you for all the contributions to support OCIM and our community.

Youth Yard Sale – July 24-25

We are accepting donations from July 19th after church through July 23rd for our youth yard sale! Drop-off location is the church fellowship hall during office hours of Monday through Thursday 9:00am to 1:00pm. All unsold donations will be taken to charity unless picked up by 12:00pm on Saturday, July 25th. The yard sale is from 8am to 11am on Friday, July 24th and Saturday July 25th.

BIG! YARD SALE
YOUTH GROUP FUNDRAISER

JULY 24-25, 2026

8-11AM

LOW PRICES **FREE COFFEE**

ANTIQUES - FURNITURE
CLOTHING FOR ALL AGES
KITCHENWARE - HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
TOYS - BABY ITEMS

WALNUT GROVE UMC
7215 WALNUT GROVE CHURCH ROAD
HURDLE MILLS, NC

Summer Arts Camp For Kids

Walnut Grove UMC

July 27-30th

9am - 12pm



Scan to register or email office@walnutgroveumc.org

A Peals For Peace

Starting Monday, July 6, at 6PM, our church bells will ring for 15 minutes in solidarity with other places of faith throughout the country with a movement in solidarity with the NC Council of Churches to share a message of peace for our world. This message of peace speaks to the need for peace in our world, in our community and state, in our homes, and in our lives. Each first Monday of the month at 6 PM until September will be a time to pause, listen, and pray. Then starting Monday, September 7, bells will ring weekly on Monday evenings until November 2nd. In a world often scarred by violence, division, and suffering, God calls us to be quick to listen and slow to speak (James 1:19). May God bring healing through this A Peals for Peace.



Tithes and Offerings

We now have five ways to give to our ministries. If you would like your offering to be allocated towards a specific ministry, please indicate it in the memo of your check or you will be prompted on the website.

1. Give during our weekly Worship Services.
2. Mail in a check to 7215 Walnut Grove Church Road, Hurdle Mills, NC 27541.
3. Use our church [website](#). Click **GIVE** in the upper right corner.
4. Use our "My Church" mobile app. Click GIVE in the lower right corner.
5. Use our Vanco QR Code, which you can find on the back of the Sunday bulletins or right here in the weekly *In A Nutshell*.

Budget News as of June 30, 2026

Year to Date Income: \$ 107,287.76

Year to Date Expenses: \$ 164,661.85

Difference: \$ (57,374.09)

Matthew 25:35 Fund Balance: \$ 2,500.36

Harvest Festival Fund Balance: \$ 14,952.84

Vanco QR Code

As we continually adapt to the gift of technology, Walnut Grove now has a Vanco QR code provided on the back of the bulletin and in the Nutshell for online giving. Simply hold your phone or tablet's camera over the code for the link to Vanco. Your generosity helps us continue serving Christ and reaching out to our community in mission and faithful witness.



JOYS & CONCERNS

Prayer List

- Pat Beck, recovering from surgery. She is a member of our church family.
- Carol Gerbracht, recovering from surgery. She is a member of our church family.
- Herbert Cates, recovering from car accident and other health concerns. He is a member of our church family.
- JoAnn Cates with health issues. She is a member of our church family.
- Rev. Meg Hoffman, battling cancer. She's the director of Seeds of Faith at Camp Chestnut Ridge.
- John Hougom from Hurdle Mills, who is being treated for lung cancer. John is the brother of Sonja Tilley and brother-in-law of Wesley Tilley.
- Rev. Mike Sykes and Pat Sykes with health concerns
- Kathy Matthews, recovering from a fall. She is a friend of Kim McColman.
- Gene Parker who has ongoing health concerns and was recently discharged from the hospital. His wife, Kay Parker, is a member of WGIMC.
- Jaxson Bates injured in a traffic accident. He is a friend of Mary Emma Roberts.
- Scott Moore, diagnosed with leukemia. He is the brother-in-law of Emma Beckham.
- Merrill Messick, who is Beverly Huey's father and Mary Dietz, her aunt.
- Sam Woods, who is facing health issues.
- Wayne Dewberry, who is facing surgery after a recent fall.
- Scott Hackler with cancer diagnosis. He is a friend of Jolinda Swiggett.
- Lynwood Lovitte, who is a member of our church family.
- Jessy Privette from Wendell has been diagnosed with cancer. Jesse is the girlfriend of Jeffrey James, who is the son of Anita James and brother of Michael James.
- Rick Johnson with health issues. He is friends with Judy Butler and many other church members.
- David Leonard having complications from surgery. He is the dad of a friend of Faith Parker.
- Leo Brooks Populorum (7 Months old), from Pittsboro, has very serious health issues. Leo is the grandson of John and Judy Guibert who are friends of Beverly Huey.
- Ben Lloyd, Cheryl Humphrey's father, with serious health issues.
- Gilbert Lee in Prince George, VA, who recently had surgery for cancer. He is Richard Lee's father
- Liz Matthews, friend of Katie Whitaker
- Kathy Kimrey with health concerns. She is the sister-in-law of Lorraine Hines and Pam Kimrey.

Prayer is powerful and we love praying for one another! If you have a request on the prayer list, we would be grateful for any updates needed. This helps us know how to continue praying and when requests may be removed or celebrated. Please let us know how we can best pray for you and your loved ones.

Send A Card

Carol Gerbracht (Thinking of You), 7004 Pendleton Place, Hillsborough, NC 27278

Pat Beck (Thinking of You), 6137 Dawn Drive, Hurdle Mills, NC 27541

Birthdays

Friday 7/10 – Collin Beck, Julie Waker, Bennett Lockamy

Sunday 7/12 – Clay Parker, Donna Hamlet

Monday 7/13 – Kim Gilbert, Norman Jones, Austin Vuolo

Wednesday 7/15 – Tammy Owens

Thursday 7/16 – Jett Gilmore

If your birthday is incorrect or missing, please contact Kim at the church office at 919-732-5722 or by email at office@walnutgroveumc.org so we can update our records.

STAYING CONNECTED

[WG YouTube](#)

[WG Facebook](#)

[Website](#)

Serving in Worship

July 12th

Acolytes: Ellen Johnson/Michael Roberts

Greeters: Clay & Cheryl S Parker

Ushers: Stacey Spake/Pat Beck

Scripture: Cheryl Humphrey

Nursery: Cathy Boling/Debby Donnelly/Grayson Nading

Trustee Open/Close: Michael James

Financial Rep: Ashley James

July 19th

Acolytes: Corbin Smith/Isaac Conway

Greeters: Tyler & Stephanie Smith

Ushers: Jimmy & Brenda Berry

Scripture: Scott Humphrey

Nursery: Judy Butler/Courtney Humphrey

Trustee Open/Close: Patty Maseth

Financial Rep: Lou Rutledge

Mowing Schedule

July 11- Scott Humphrey

July 25 - Bruce Richardson

August 8 - Mike Parker

August 22 - Barry Walker

July 18 - Jimmy Berry

August 1- Todd Harris

August 15 - Clay Parker

August 29 - Phil Hines

NOTE: If you're unable to serve in your role listed above, please find someone to serve in your place and notify Kim of the change. This will allow us to have an updated listing to publish each week.

Upcoming Events

Sunday, July 12	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church
Tuesday, July 14	7:00pm Building Committee meeting
Wednesday, July 15	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Sunday, July 19	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 2:00pm Finance Committee meeting 3:00pm SPRC meeting
Mon-Fri, July 20-24	Local Missions Week for Youth
Tuesday, July 21	7:00pm Methodist Men
Wednesday, July 22	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Thursday, July 23	6:30pm Harvest Festival meeting
Fri-Sat., July 24-25	Youth Yard Sale
Sunday, July 26	9:30am Sunday School 10:30am Worship Service 10:45am Children's Church
Mon-Thurs, July 27-30	9am-12pm Summer Arts Camp for Kids
Wednesday, July 29	6:30pm Worship Band 7:00pm Worship Choir
Fri-Sat., July 31-Aug 1	Walnut Grove Crafters

See You Sunday!!